



Arizona Department of Public Safety

- For Immediate Release -

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The Arizona Department of Public Safety offers driving safety tips in case of rapid air loss in a vehicle tire or mechanical failure

The Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) would like to offer some summer driving and safety tips in light of the extreme temperatures being experienced throughout Arizona. One of the many unfortunate experiences for motorists traveling in the summer heat is tire or mechanical failure. Aside from keeping plenty of drinking water in your vehicle, along with a first aid kit, the following tips can help you prevent a tire or mechanical failure or safely respond to such a failure if one occurs.

The first thing a motorist needs to do in order to help prevent a tire or mechanical failure is make sure their vehicle is being properly maintained. The following tips can help motorists stay on track with vehicle maintenance items vital to safe summer driving:

- Follow your vehicle manufacture's suggested maintenance schedule and guidelines. Check your vehicle's fluid levels regularly to ensure proper levels are maintained and check belt(s) and hoses for dry or cracked appearance. Also, check your regular parking area for any oils or fluids which may have accumulated on the ground from your vehicle, before major internal damage is done to your vehicle.
- Properly inflate your vehicle's tires, including the spare, and check the pressure with an accurate tire gauge when you fuel up or monthly, whichever is first. When airing tires, inspect them for tire wear. Tires can lose 1 to 10 pounds of pressure (psi) a month.
- Rotate and balance wheels and tires once every to 6,000 to 8,000 miles if no rotation schedule is specified in the owners manual for your vehicle. By rotating your tires regularly, it will lengthen the life-span of your tires, saving you time and money.

However, even if you follow maintenance guidelines, your vehicle can still experience a tire or mechanical failure. The following tips can help guide your actions should your vehicle experience a failure:

- The first indication of a tire failure could be a loud booming sound (blow-out), or the feel of your vehicle pulling to one side of the road along with a bumpy ride. This is

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an extremely important moment for the driver where it is critical that the driver stay calm and avoid panicking.

- DO NOT brake at this moment.
- DO NOT take your foot off of the accelerator at this moment.
- Instead, ease your foot into the accelerator to maintain your vehicle's momentum or speed.
- Compensate for pull by counter steering.
- Find a safe location, preferably a freeway exit, decelerate or brake lightly, and park away from traffic. Put your hood up, and call for help or to make arrangements with your motor club or a local two or roadside service if necessary. Or, refer to the vehicle owners manual to perform the tire change or repair on your own as long as you are comfortable doing so.

Additional tips:

- In the event of any vehicle problem, most importantly, maintain control your vehicle, and then worry about the cause of the problem.
- **Buckle-up** - make sure you and all of your vehicle's occupants are properly restrained.
- Keep proper seat and hand positions and utilize good driving habits.
- **Drive alert, attentive, and sober.** If you become tired pull over in a safe place and rest. Avoid unnecessary distractions, such as text messaging, or reaching within the vehicle to pick up a dropped item or attend to a back seat passenger.
- **Obey traffic laws** - These laws are in place for a reason. Not only are violations like speeding and aggressive driving illegal, they present dangers to you, your passengers, and others on the roadway. In addition, such violations are very hard on your vehicle. Speeding, tailgating, and aggressive driving greatly increases your chance of being involved in a collision, and reduces the amount of time you have to avoid one.
- **Move Over, it's the law** - When you see flashing lights ahead, move over and slow down. Passed by the Arizona Legislature and signed into law by Governor Janet Napolitano in 2005, the "Move Over" law gets its name from the idea of having drivers safely merge to an adjacent lane on highways with two or more lanes proceeding in the same direction when police or emergency personnel are stopped near or on the road. The law recognizes that sometimes it is not possible or the second lane just does not exist to move over. Those situations call for reduced speeds and proceeding with extreme caution.

- End -

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